

**Meeting of the
U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science**

**February 17, 2000
Los Angeles Times Building**

[These minutes report actions and summarize discussions occurring at the Commission meeting. A verbatim transcript of the meeting is maintained at the Commission office.]

NCLIS Members:	Martha Gould, Acting Chairperson; C. E. “Abe” Abramson; Rebecca Bingham; Joan Challinor (via telephone); José-Marie Griffiths; Jack Hightower; Beverly Sheppard; Winston Tabb
NCLIS Staff and Consultants:	Robert Willard, Executive Director; Judith Russell, Deputy Director; Elizabeth Bingham; F. Woody Horton; Rosalie Vlach; Barbara Whiteleather
NCLIS Liaisons and Guests:	Nancy Bolt, representing the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies; Ann Molod; Peyton Neal, representing the Software and Information Industry Association; Jonathan Orszag, Department of Commerce; Eleanor (Joey) Rodger, representing the Urban Libraries Council; Emily Sheketoff, representing the American Library Association; Sandy Schuckett, representing the White House Conference on Library and Information Services Taskforce; Carol Talen, National Institute for Literacy

Acting Chairperson’s Report

Acting Chairperson Gould highlighted recent meetings and activities:

- Speaker, “Costs of Scientific Publications and Electronic Formats.” Center for Research Libraries.
- Digital Divide Summit sponsored by the U.S. Department of Commerce, December, December 9, 1999.
- Chair, NCLIS public meeting on the National Technical Information Service (NTIS), January 19, 2000.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Willard provided a status report on activities in the following areas:

1. *Personnel*: Two new additions to the staff: (a) Rosalie Vlach, an expert in the area of public and congressional communications has been hired as the Director of Legislative and Public Affairs and as project director for Sister Libraries; and (b) La Keshia Murray, Executive Secretary, replacing Cherylene Rollerson.
2. *NCLIS appropriations*: On November 29, 1999, the President signed the Appropriations Bill; NCLIS will receive \$1.3 million -- a 30 percent increase over last year.
3. *Publications and reports*: Because of continuing interest, the brochure on "Kids and the Internet" is being reprinted. The NCLIS hearing report is 99.8 percent ready for publication. The NCLIS hearing report on "Library and Information Services for Individuals with Disabilities" is nearing completion. Ms. Russell and Ms. Vlach are preparing the *FY 1998-1999 Annual Report*, and completion is expected shortly.
4. *Report on NCLIS programs/projects*, including Sister Libraries; the Government Printing Office Report; the proposed transfer of the National Technical Information Service; the proposed National Forum on Library and Information Services; UNESCO funding; and
5. *Attendance and presentations at NCLIS related conferences, meetings and events*, including the Digital Divide Summit; meeting to discuss IFLA 2001, Association of Research Libraries, with Winston Tabb; meeting convened by the Public Printer on long-term preservation of information; meeting with the Deputy Director of the National Archives and Record Administration regarding preservation and long-time access issues; attendance at ALA mid-winter; commencement address at the Library School, University of Maryland; speaker, National Association of Attorneys General Internet meeting, and presentation on NCLIS initiatives, Chief Officers of State Library Agencies.

NCLIS Meeting Calendar

The NCLIS meeting calendar was reviewed. Members expressed personal interest in attending specific meetings and/or conferences. The 200th anniversary of the Library of Congress will be held April 24, 2000, and all Commissioners are invited to this "national birthday party."

National Award for Library Service

Ms. Sheppard reported on the process for announcing and soliciting nominations for the first-time National Award for Library Service. She reported that more than 70 nominations were received. NCLIS Members have reviewed the nominations and made recommendations to the IMLS Director, who makes the final selection. The award ceremony will be held on April 10, 2000 in Washington, D.C.

Future NCLIS Meetings

The next Commission meeting will be a strategic planning session on April 11, 2000 in conjunction with the library awards presentation on April 10. Suggestions for future NCLIS meeting locations included: The LBJ Library and/or The University of Texas, Austin; OCLC, Dublin, and/or the Hamilton County Public Library, Cincinnati, Ohio. An offer has been received from the Director, Cincinnati and Hamilton County Public Library, to host an NCLIS meeting.

Chairperson Gould suggested the Commission focus on the status and role of school libraries (particularly addressing the issues of literacy, information literacy, and the digital divide).

The Commission celebrates its 30th birthday on July 19, 2000. It is suggested that official commemorative activities take place between the period the President signed the legislation establishing the Commission (July 20) and the date of the first meeting (September 20, the following year). This is the model used for NCLIS' 25th anniversary. Mr. Willard noted that the Commission was established as a result of a proposal by a temporary presidential commission appointed by former President Lyndon B. Johnson. Since the records establishing the Commission reside in the LBJ Library, Mr. Willard suggested that an event at the LBJ Library would honor the former President's involvement in supporting the establishment of the Commission.

Scholarly Publishing

Commissioner Griffiths recommended that the hearing on scholarly publishing be postponed until this fall, at the earliest. Carolyn Snyder and the Big 12+ Librarians accepted the Commission's request to prepare a "straw man" paper; the document is expected in time for discussion at the April 2000 NCLIS meeting.

NCLIS Strategic Plan

Commission comments are requested on the draft NCLIS Strategic Plan included in the NCLIS meeting notebook.

Sister Libraries

Beth Bingham, NCLIS Consultant, described in detail the events of the Sister Libraries Project over the past year. Ms. Bingham was praised for contributing "100 percent" to this project.

Based on the Sister Libraries Project, ALISE is considering a Sister Library School Project, Mr. Horton noted.

Library Statistics

The FY 2000 Memorandum of Understanding (in the amount of \$225,000), which provides partial funding for the Library Statistics Program, has been signed by the Department of Education officials.

The FY 2000 Internet connectivity survey, Testing National Public Library Electronic Use and Network Performance Measures: Phase II of Developing National Public Library Statistics and Performance Measures for the Networked Environment, will be completed by John Bertot and Charles McClure by August 31, 2000 at a cost of \$49,500.

White House Conference on Library and Information Services

Personal letters were delivered to the President from Chairperson Simon and Mr. Willard requesting a White House Conference Library and Information Services. Mr. Willard's letter included pictures of the President (then-Governor of Arkansas) with former Vice Chairman Bessie B. Moore and a tape and transcript of his speech at the first White House Conference in 1979. The President's response, dated February 1, 2000, read, in part, "...I am deeply committed to supporting our nation's libraries, and believe they are among our most important and cherished institutions...I appreciate the work [of the Commission] everyday to ensure that they continue to be a vital, educational, social and cultural resource."

National Technical Information Service

In its role as "honest broker" and after consulting with over 100 experts and other concerned individuals to solicit their views, NCLIS developed a draft *Emerging Consensus Position Paper* on the NTIS Closure and Transfer Matter. The Commission is committed to providing a final report to the President and Congress by mid-March 2000.

The Commissioners agreed to post the draft Consensus Paper on NCLIS' web site for public review and comment. Suggested short-term alternatives (more feasible and practical) are to keep NTIS in the Department of Commerce; transfer it to the Library of Congress; transfer it to the Government Printing Office; or transfer it to the National Archives and Records Administration. Long-term alternatives (which require much more study) include creating a new national science, engineering and technology library; transferring functions to the Department of Energy; or creating a new independent service bureau/organization.

Jonathon Orszag, Director of Policy, U.S. Department of Commerce, presented a brief overview of the situation facing NTIS. He called NTIS' "core clearinghouse" a national treasure with millions and millions of science and technology documents dating 50 years in one place. "This is a very important collection, and the question is, how do we maintain access to that information in a way that is fiscally responsible but also ensures public access?" NTIS has lost money five years in a row and is now in danger of being deficient. As a result, both short-term and long-term solutions are being sought.

UNESCO

In the mid 1980's, the United States dropped out as a Member of UNESCO because of policy disagreements and concern about the administrative efficiencies of the organization. In addition, the U.S. has been delinquent in paying dues to the overarching international organization, the United Nations. However, the official attitude of the government is now different and Congress has appropriated the arrearage in dues to the United Nations.

After discussion, the Commission passed a *Resolution to Support the U.S. Rejoining UNESCO* as soon as possible (Attachment 1).

FY 2000 Financial Report

The NCLIS FY 2000 Financial Report (through January 31, 2000) was reviewed and discussed. Ms. Russell reported that NCLIS office space will be expanded to include a larger conference room as well as a more appealing reception area.

Liaison Comments

- Emily Sheketoff, representing the American Library Association Washington Office, called for Commission attention and action to the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and to the *ALA Resolution on the Return of the United States of America to UNESCO*. She encouraged NCLIS/ALA partnership and close dialogue on all related issues.
- Nancy Bolt, representing the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA), presented a copy of COSLA's legislative agenda that included the LSTA Reauthorization. Acting Chairperson Gould offered the Commission's presence on the LSTA Reauthorization Task Force when established.

Regarding the proposed National Forum for Libraries, COSLA recommended: (1) Rescheduling until after the next election so that legislators and the new administration can be involved meaningfully; (2) Clarifying the expected role of the state libraries and what funds will be allocated to for preparatory activities and travel to the forum; and (3) Clarifying delegate selections.

- Joey Rodger, representing the Urban Libraries Council, invited Commissioners to take part in a first-ever conference in December, co-hosted by the Chicago Public Library, entitled: *Partners for Successful Cities: Community Development; Downtown Development; Neighborhood Development*.
- Sandy Schuckett, representing the White House Conference on Library and Information Taskforce (WHCLIST) discussed: (a) ESEA issues; and (b) a resolution from ALA passed during mid-winter stating that ALA supports the concept of a national forum.
- Peyton Neal, representing the Software and Information Industry Association, praised the Commission for its work on the GPO project and the NTIS issue.

Los Angeles Times

During a dinner meeting with Kathryn Downing, Publisher, and staff members of the Los Angeles Times, the Members heard presentations "Reading by 9: A Child Literacy Initiative for the Greater Los Angeles area."

February 18, 2000

Following a breakfast meeting with the Library of California Board, the Commission met at the Los Angeles Public Library and received greetings from Susan Kent, City Librarian.

The Members held a two-hour round table discussion led by Dean Patricia Senn Breivik, Chair of the Forum for Information Literacy, and Wally Baer, Rand Corporation, on school, academic and public library activities and Federal government initiatives in the area of information literacy.

The discussion was followed by lunch with guests from the Los Angeles Public Library.

Attachment